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Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, August 22, 1930

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Betty Lou Plans a Sunday Dinner." Simple menu a child could prepare, approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletins available: "Home Baking," and "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipos."

I hope some of your ten-to-fourteen daughters have been trying the delicious meals Betty Lou has learned to prepare for her family under her mother's guidance.

My first idea about these meals was that Betty Lou and other girls in "Junior High" could save their mothers a little now and then by assuming the work of meal-getting for one day. Not long ago I had an opportunity to see what this sort of training at the in-between age does for a girl herself.

I visited a bride of some six months! standing, and enjoyed one of the most charmingly served and well-cooked meals I have ever eaten. As I know that my young friend worked in an office all day, and had to do both her marketing and cooking after five-thirty in the evening, I was naturally curious to hear the secret of her excellent management.

"Just when did you learn to cook so nicely and manage so easily, Kitty?"
I asked her. "You've been away at college for four years -- your vacations, as I recall, were full of other things. You married so soon after graduation -- and, if I'm not mistaken, you went to work the day after your honeymoon was over. It doesn't seem to me you had much chance to learn cooking and meal-planning. Did you take home economics at college?"

"No," she confessed, "I didn't. I went in for straight science and economics, and history and literature. Of course I'd like you to think I was just naturally bright, but I guess I must give mother some credit.

"You see when I was a little girl, about eleven, mother thought it would be a fine idea for me to get dinners all by myself once a week. So we planned menus that I could manage. It's not so much the ability to cook separate dishes that a girl ought to know, Aunt Sammy; it's the trick of having everything done, and done to a turn, at the same time. The assemblin of the meal, that is the hard thing at first. Any intelligent girl who can read a cook book can follow one recipe at a time. The thing we have to learn is when to start each vegetable, the meat, and so on.

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"The minute I was married it all came back to me. I just seemed to remember without trying, exactly how I was taught to do different things—and then I guess my college training in reasoning helped, too, for I haven't had a hard time at all. And I discover things now and tell my mother about them, and that's a real triumph."

I told her about Betty Lou's dinners, and she was very much interested.

"What's the latest one?" she wanted to know. "I'd like something easy for next Sunday."

This is the menu I told her about: Are you ready to write it down? Casserole Chicken with Vegetables; Baked Potatoes; Corn on the Cob; Sliced Tomatoes; Fresh Fruits, and Cake.

I'll give you the recipe for the casserole chicken in a moment or two. The fresh fruits were the centerpiece of Betty Lou's table -- all the choicest fruits she could find, beautifully arranged in a fluted green pottery bowl. Peaches, pears, plums, grapes, and a rosy apple or two.

The cake she made on Saturday, using the Foundation Cake recipe in the Radio Cookbook, with vanilla frosting made in the double boiler, as described on page 75 in the cook book.

I'll give you the recipe now for Betty Lou's Casserole Fowl with Vegetables. Nine ingredients to be listed. Shall I begin?

4 or 5 bound fowl

3 carrots

1 medium-sized bunch celery

1 onion

l green pepper

2 tablespoons butter or other fat

1 cup hot water

l cup milk, and

1-1/2 tablespoons flour.

Nine ingredients for Casserole Fowl with Vegetables: (Repeat).

Slice or chop the vegetables in very small pieces. Cut the fowl into pieces of the right size for serving, dust them with flour, season with salt and pepper, and brown delicately in the fat. As the fowl is removed from the frying pan, place it in a casserole. Pour the chopped vegetables into the frying pan and let them absorb the browned fat. Then transfer them to the casserole, add a cup of hot water, cover tightly, and cook in a slow oven for 3 hours, or longer if the fowl is very tough. Add more water from time to time if necessary. Just before serving; remove the pieces of fowl, and add the milk and flour, which have been blended. Cook for 10 minutes longer and pour this vegetable sauce over the fowl, or replace it in the sauce and serve from the casserole. Allow plenty of the sauce. If one casserole will not hold it all, use a second or some other heavy covered vessel for cooking part of the fowl and vegetables.

The baked potatoes were a good choice because the oven was already in use. So that only left the corn to shuck and tomatoes to slice while the other things were cooking.

Perhaps I'd better repeat the menu: Casserole Chicken with Vegetables; Baked Potatoes; Corn on the Cob; Sliced Tomatoes; Fresh Fruits, and Cake.

Monday; "Ice Creams Frozen Without Stirring."

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